

INL News Release
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ISU's Energy Systems Technology and Education Center opens doors to new facility

POCATELLO — On Nov. 7, the doors opened to the new Energy Systems Technology and Education Center (ESTEC) facility at Idaho State University.

The ESTEC, established in 2007, will train the specialists to help meet the growing needs for energy system technicians, promote regional economic competitiveness and increase regional job opportunities.

The Center has been developed through the partnership of ISU's College of Technology, Idaho National Laboratory and the Partnership for Prosperity. Cutting the ribbon for the facility are INL Deputy Director Juan Alvarez, ISU President Arthur Vailas and Partners for Prosperity Board Chair John Warner.

Through efforts of the partnership, the Center was established with grants of more than \$2.5 million from the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Science Foundation. The curriculum consists of three associate of applied science degrees: instrumentation and control technology, electrical engineering technology (both degree programs now under way) and mechanical engineering technology (to be offered starting in the fall of 2009).

Work on renovating the former College of Technology's Industrial Crafts building to provide classroom and laboratory space for the Center started in the summer of 2007.

The ESTEC program lets students experience hands-on, laboratory-based courses of study that give them training applicable to a variety of energy sector technologies including fossil, nuclear and renewable energy. It allows students to experience working in industrial settings. It also provides a collaborative environment for INL, ISU and industrial partners to conduct applied industrial research on next-generation electrical components and systems.

INL officials noted the laboratory has been an active partner in the Center's programs since its inception. The laboratory has given the Center access to private utility sector organizations and technical expertise, provided technical support in developing the Center's curriculum and contributed curriculum developed within INL. Lab staff and managers have offered classroom instruction on special topics, supported proposal development, project planning and management, and supported the board of directors for the Center.

Richard Holman, deputy director for ESTEC and Energy Workforce Initiatives manager for INL, said, "Today's opening of ESTEC marks the start of a new chapter in the successful energy workforce development relationship between Partners for Prosperity, Idaho National Laboratory and Idaho State University. It further supports the goal of establishing southeast Idaho as a destination for energy research, development, education and training."

Additionally, the Center has already facilitated energy industry sector interaction to provide resources, such as equipment and classroom support and potential job opportunities for graduates.

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